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ABSTRACT

This paper considers the ongoing debate between two organizations (National Association of Scholars and Teachers for a Democratic Culture) in higher education. The rhetorical positions of each side resemble those of the "cold war" between the United States and the Soviet Union of the 1950s and 1960s where each side created a mirror image of the other based on ethnocentric perceptions. While the image of cold war is a metaphor, the metaphor is developed and articulated by the use of images and stories that sustain the understanding of the conflict. A mirror image can develop when the parties in conflict believe that: (1) there are only two sides; (2) the conflict is zero-sum; and (3) their side is losing. When disagreeing bodies create a mirror image of the other side, a destructive cycle of rhetorical imagery is generated that prevents resolution of the conflict. (Contains a table with examples of mirror image rhetoric and 34 references.) (Author)

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MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL: EXAMINING THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOLARS AND TEACHERS FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE DEBATE

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ABSTRACT

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL: EXAMINING THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOLARS AND TEACHER'S FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE DEBATE

This paper considers the ongoing debate between two organizations (National Association of Scholars, Teacher's for Democratic Culture) in higher education. The rhetorical position of each side resemble those of the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union of the 1950s and 1960s where each sided created a mirror image of the other based on ethnocentric perceptions. While the image of cold war is a metaphor, the metaphor is developed and articulated by the use of images and stories that sustain the understanding of the conflict. A mirror image can develop when the parties in conflict believe that: (1) there are only two sides, (2) the conflict is zero-sum, and (3) their side is losing. When disagreeing bodies create a mirror image of the other side a destructive cycle of rhetorical imagery is generated that prevents resolution of the conflict.

The colleges and universities in the United States sometimes resemble civil war zones as members of the same departments and colleges debate issues in a manner that turns colleagues into combat veterans. The arguments that exist between those whom favor multicultural education/multiculturalism and diversity versus those who favor a more traditional approach to higher education creates a split between faculty members. The term "politically correct" has served as a rallying cry for both sides, either as a term of approbation or as something to reject as an unfair characterization of ideas that serve to include as participants in the academy members with historically low rates of participation.

This essay is an analysis of one of the splits (between the National Association of Scholars and the Teachers for Democratic Culture) within the academy that has created a "Cold War" mentality among some faculty. The term "cold" war is one that meant the conflict is not open, but rather represents a struggle between competing ideologies. Each views the struggle existing at multiple levels: the individual, the institution, and the culture. The phrase applied to Vietnam, "hearts and minds", represents the "war" that occurs as the proponents argue to convince others (usually bystanders effected by the struggle) of the rightness of the cause. Each side conducts this war in the press, the faculty legislative bodies, and the classroom. Arguments become weapons, while press coverage, majorities, and credit hours define the basis for victories.

The term "Cold War" provides a metaphor to describe a state of hostile relations. A "hot" or shooting war is one where there exists a declared war ending with a negotiated settlement or surrender. At the end of a hot war there is a "peace" but a cold war is neither peace nor war. Worse, there can be no negotiation to end the conflict, since the conflict does not officially exist. What exists are the antagonisms, the casualties, and the rhetoric of the ongoing struggle. The term "cold war" provides a metaphor that serves the purpose of rhetorical invention. The use of a metaphor creates a motive or interpretation of reality that invites audience identification (Ivie, 1982, 1987; Leff, 1983). A metaphor provides the basis for constructing and evaluating the discourse and events in a situation. The

acceptance of a metaphor as an accurate or appropriate method of representing events creates a model for rhetorical invention. As this model dominates the discourse, the participants use this vision as a terministic screen (Burke, 1969) to measure and evaluate messages.

Burke (1969) defines metaphor as "device for seeing something in terms of something else." In other words, metaphor involves talking about A in terms of (or from the perspective of) B. In using metaphor we emphasize certain characteristics (Burke, 1969, pp. 503-504). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue metaphors are not simply a device used on special occasions; rather metaphor pervades our language, and thought itself is largely metaphoric. To illustrate, they point to the larger conception of "argument as war", and the consequent expressions of that metaphoric conception in phrases such as "your claims are *indefensible*", "the writer *attacked every weak point* in my argument", and "the criticism were *right on target*" (p. 3-4). An examination of the specific metaphors used in discourse allows the critic to discover the broader metaphoric conceptualizations, and from these the speakers' motives, and the implications of these conceptualizations and motives. For example, if speakers conceptualize argument as war, then the persons they argue with are enemies. However, if speakers think of arguments as journey, then they argue with traveling companions to reach a common destination.

Metaphor serves as a the necessary link between what often appear as separate and unconnected events. Actions that appear independent are reinterpreted as part of the larger struggle, the vision of each action as part of the battle. This paper concentrates on how in using the cold war metaphor, each side developed a perception of the other. The use of a metaphor provides insight into the framing of issues. The choice of the authors to accept the warlike metaphor of the protagonists permits further analysis by applying another metaphor (mirror image) to the understanding of the rhetorical exchanges.

DESCRIBING A MIRROR IMAGE METAPHOR

The metaphor of "mirror image" means that the conception held of the other party is not dependent on the actions or beliefs of the other. Instead, the examination of the other is viewed through a lens that exaggerates the hostility and power of the other party, while minimizing one's own resources and at the same time magnifying one's own good intentions (Mandel, 1979). The term mirror image has been applied to the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War (Brofenbrenner, 1961; Eckhardt & White, 1967; Oskamp, 1965; Singer, 1964). The development of a mirror image comes from a sense of ethnocentrism that creates a feeling of superiority on the part of the ingroup to outgroups. When both sides develop the perception that only one other side exists, that all actions must be evaluated in terms of the conflict, and one begins to believe your side is losing, the basis for mirror image begins. Mirror imaging is a destructive perception because the opposition's moves become evaluated through a lens that distorts the sense of reality. Since all actions are part of the struggle, and the other side is threatening and evil, it is difficult to generate a level of collaboration necessary to conduct meaningful negotiation.

A mirror image develops a picture of a polarized world where everyone is either on one side or the other side. Persons not taking sides are naive, inexperienced, counterrevolutionaries, or fellow travelers. There are no innocents; all people are part of the war zone whether they realize it or not. All persons must make a choice, not about the participation in the conflict, but rather on whose side they ultimately are on.

All acts on stage are political and must be defined in terms of the conflict. No action is neutral. If both parties are involved, a struggle for power ensues. If one party is involved, it is trying to achieve a decisive victory over the other side. The perception of involvement by one side is usually matched by involvement of the other side.

The second perception is that the actions and venues of conflict generate zero-sum outcomes. Every victory or loss creates joy or pain for the other side. All efforts become evaluated on the basis of success, relative to the struggle. Every struggle either loses or gains ground for the side. Every effort is

made to ensure that the opposition does not gain a foothold in the department or the curriculum. Initiatives and changes become evaluated not on individual merit but on how this fits into the struggle. Proponents and opponents of action invoke the cold war metaphor if they see an advantage in labeling their own position or that of an opponent.

Reprehensible actions, inconsistent with the premises of the system are justified, because the other side is worse. In fact, the other side is to blame for this action because the need to create a "level playing field" requires actions whose ethics are questionable. This justifies the attitude, "well, he may be a bastard, but he is our bastard," approach to deciding whether to support some person or policy. The result in the foreign policy of the United States was support for regimes in Chile, South Africa, and other countries whose internal human rights policies were reprehensible. The justification for the support of the dictators and torturers was the common refrain, "well, they are anti-Communist." The result is that the "sins" of the actions of an individual are overlooked because sometimes it is necessary to look at the larger picture. Similarly, accusations of communism when leveled against Mao or Ho Chi Minh resulted in immediate sanction even though such attitudes may not have reflected an anti-United States attitude. The position quickly becomes ideological and increasingly unable to find compromises.

The last attribute of a mirror image is one of threat. The side must appear to be losing or seriously threatened to cause an examination. If there is no threat, then no need exists to respond to the other side. The key is that the way of life is at stake, and the existence of the entire system becomes endangered by the other party. However, the "cold" war recognizes that the threat represents an antagonism that must be managed without the outbreak of open conflict. The metaphor provides a basis for the examination of the actions of the other party; since the motivation is already understood, the only assessment is how the actions of the other advance the agenda. Remembering that the war is "cold" means that weapons may be subtle -- Trojan horse issues or sneaky little incursions that must be carefully responded to.

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A weapon built by the side is to defend against aggression and to maintain the system. A weapon built by the other side is a threat to stability. Our use of escalation is justified because it is an attempt to match what the other side is planning. A program developed by one side must be matched with a program by the other side. The view on resources becomes a view of a race to gain outcomes before the other side can take advantage of the situation.

The problem with the development of a mirror image is the eventual lack of ability for the two sides to construct a useful dialog. No dialog is possible when each side believes the other is fundamentally dishonest and threatening.

COLD WAR AND MIRROR IMAGE

The post World War II era found two major power blocs for international politics: (a) the West--dominated by the United States supported by NATO, SEATO, CENTO, the Rio Treaty, etc., and the (b) the Eastern bloc--dominated by the Soviet Union supported by the Warsaw Pact, Communist China, and other countries with similar interests. What happened in the Post World War II era was a division of the world into two general spheres. That world was abruptly shattered when the Soviet Union split into the constituent republics and no longer enforced the separation between Eastern and Western Europe. The minute that the Berlin wall came down, the symbol of separation no longer existed.

Kane (1991) traces the public use of the term "cold war" to Bernard Baruch in a 1947 speech in Columbia, South Carolina. Syndicated columnist Walter Lippman "repeated the phrase," and it soon became widely used to describe the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. Kane asserts that "the Cold War was fundamentally a rhetorical enterprise." As the term developed, it "became a frame of reference through which to view, understand and explain all the historical events that occurred during its lengthy life span. Battles fought in the name of the cold war, both actual and metaphorically, accumulated a legacy that permeated every aspect of American culture" (p. 80).

The Cold War was not strictly rhetorical. Dudley (1992) points out that wars were fought, U.S. agencies such as the National Security Council and Central Intelligence Agency were established, and loyalty programs were created (p. 74, 132). Historian H. W. Brands (1993) describes the Cold War as a strategic struggle to contain the Soviet Union. And also an economic struggle to keep other nations within the American economic sphere. The Cold War also provided American politicians with a means to gain domestic support, through increasingly subtle techniques of red-baiting (p. vi-vii).

Research into Cold war rhetoric has discovered several recurring themes, or metaphoric clusters. Ivie (1990) found that cold warriors used "the metaphor of savagery" to describe "a hostile and threatening enemy" to gain acceptance for a speaker's ideas. Speakers portrayed the enemy as "as irrational, coercive, and aggressive." Metaphors of natural disasters, animal predators, criminals, lunatics, and mindless machines enhance the overall imagery of savagery. Building on these themes, cold warriors typically described the enemy as "preying upon America's fragile freedom." To discuss protecting these fragile freedoms, speakers used two competing "metaphoric concepts—containment and liberation…" (p. 74-75). Kane (1991) describes the tone of Cold War rhetoric as "a divisive and uncompromising tone which exaggerated differences and minimized common interests, and as an action narrative which redefined events and claimed the superiority of the American experiences."

The result of several decades of conflict using proxies or indirect means was the development of a mirror image of the other side. This image was constructed partly because contact with the other side was restricted and this undermined the ability to generate understanding. All moves, motives, and actions became judged in the international (often the domestic arena) in terms of resolving the conflict favorably. Since both sides represented that they were in fact losing, the struggle went on.

THE COLD WAR AND MIRROR IMAGES IN ACADEMIA

Currently, there exists a state of cold war between the forces of multicultural and traditional education. Two organizations, the Teachers for Democratic Culture and the National Association of

Scholars represent opposite forces in this debate. Each side seems to accept the idea of a cultural war existing. Table 1 provides some addtional examples of this kind of rhetoric.

The Teachers for Democratic Culture have a statement of purpose which in part reads (*Democratic Culture*, 1995, *p14*):

> It is our view that recent curricular reforms influenced by multiculturalism and feminism have greatly enriched education rather than corrupted it. It is our view as well that the controversies that have been provoked over admisssions and hiring practices, the social functions of teaching and scholarship, and the status of such concepts as objectivity and ideology are signs of educational health, not decline.
>
> It is time for those who believe in the values of democratic education and reasoned dialogue to join together in an organization that can fight such powerful forms of intolerance and answer mischievous misrepresentations. We support the right of scholars and teachers to raise questions about the relations of culture, scholarship, and education to politics--not to shut down debate on such issues but to open it. It is such a debate that is prevented by discussion-stopping slogans like "political correctness."

The National Association of Scholars major publication, *Academic Questions* (Volume, 9) posits as the editorial purpose inside the cover:

> American higher education has been profoundly compromised in the past two decades. Standards have been eroded, the curriculum has been debased, and research has been trivialized or distorted by ideology. Yet the established voices of the academy often speak in tones that are self-congratulatory rather than self-critical. *Academic Questions* utilizes the best of scholarly analysis to explore the conspicuous vices, as well as the virtues, of the contemporary university. A critique of the academy by academics themselves, *Academic Questions*, will uphold the traditions of humanism and intellectual freedom.

The previous two editorial statements about the purpose of the organizations define two organizations in conflict. The statements indicate both sides are dedicated to exposing the intention of the other side to limit and destroy debate. Both sides believe that the other side wants to limit discussion, to restrict the playing field, and is detrimental to the educational environment. Both sides accuse the other side of trying to create or maintain rhetorical ground by unfairly restricting the other side. The questions to ask to determine if a mirror image attitude is existing are: (a) Is the world defined as polarized? (b) Is the world a zero sum set of outcomes? (c) Is our side losing? The questions ask whether each side is beginning the process of generating perceptions of themselves relative to an opposition that leads to mirror imaging. The next sections explore how the various elements of a mirror image becomes established by examining the official publications of the two organizations.

Two Sides Exist

The first question considers whether the parties consider the world as bifurcated or not. A cold war and mirror image is difficult to maintain if there exist multiple positions, or if alliances are only temporary. In a multilateral configuration, an alliances may only function for particular issues or for particular settings. But in a Cold War and mirror image situation, there are only two sides and the dividing line is clearly defined.

The analysis does not consider whether objectively there are only two positions, the evaluation is whether the parties have the **perception** that only two sides exist. Undoubtedly, many persons in the environment probably either do not recognize or care about the conflict. The development of a mirror image does not require grand conspiracy theories because each side does not have to be organized; the focus is on outcome not the process of change.

Both the Teachers for a Democratic Culture (TDC) and the National Association of Scholars (NAS) suggest that two sides exist by using war metaphors; and through arguments that they speak for truth, morality, open debate, reason, and academic freedom, while the opponent favors the opposite. The

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war they fight is for intellectual control of the academy. The options are often characterized as choices between roads to travel or one of two options. This sense of choice, through the use of rhetorical questions, emphasizes the belief in a dichotomous choice.

Articles in *Democratic Culture*, the publication of the Teachers for Democratic Culture (TDC), argue that the National Association of Scholars (NAS) and like-minded organizations threaten multiculturalism in the academy with their use of the term "politically correct" as a pejorative for "multiculturalism." The TDC argues that they favor academic freedom through open debate and reason and truth telling, while the opposition diminishes academic freedom. For example, a "Statement of Principles" published in the Fall, 1993 issue of *Democratic Culture* maintains that, "contrary to media reports, it is the National Association of Scholars, their corporate foundation supporters, and like-minded writers in the press who are endangering education with a campaign of harassment and misrepresentation." In contrast to the "inaccurate accounts" and "discussion-stopping slogans" of the opposition, the TDC believes in "democratic education and reasoned dialog" and "principled discussion." The article describes the opposition as limiting the discussion to "a simple choice between civilization and barbarism," while they hypocritically "invoke the values of rational debate and open discussion." In contrast, the TDC will "refute malicious distortions" while they educate the public on "new theories and movements, such as deconstruction, feminism, multiculturalism, and the new historicism... ". The TDC accuses the NAS of limiting the choice to two sides but in doing so argue for an alternative that seems exclusive of the other, which in fact endorses the perception of only two sides existing. The starkness of the contrasts indicates an underlying belief that the choice between organizations is a choice between two alternatives.

Articles and letters in *Democratic Culture* convey the same antagonisms as found in the NAS "Statement of Principles". For example, Jay and Graff (1993, Fall) contend that they are joining others to counter charges that the academy is politically correct. They state, "we still believe that the anti-PC assault was and is orchestrated by politically-motivated operatives outside higher education who want to

turn back the clock to the days of ivy-covered, white male prep schools catering to the American power elite" (p. 1). The statement suggests two enemies engaging each other through covert operations. The proponents argue for a conspiracy theory using a war move (assault) on the position of the TDC. Lazere (1993, Spring) describes the conservative criticism of the academic left as a "misrepresentation." He contends that conservatives "go at texts with malice aforethought, like heat-seeking missiles searching for the most extreme-sounding passages to jerk out of context" (p. 6). Other scholars writing in *Democratic Culture* describe conservative opponents with such terms as "in willful ignorance of the facts"; "The truth will be less important than perpetuating the story about the evils of political correctness" (Wilson, Fall 1993, p. 12); "smears and distorted statements" (Wilson, Fall 1993, p. 17); and "a new ideas industry and ideology apparatus specifically designed to circumvent and subvert the traditional institutions of higher education" (Fall 1992, p. 5). The representations both increase the sense of unity by the opposition as well as increase the sense of a war raging on campus between two entities. The struggle is defined as two bodies doing battle over ideas and representations within the academy.

The National Association of Scholars describes a similar situation, an academy where liberals are the opposition to truth and morality. The inside back cover of several editions of *Academic Questions* briefly describes the purpose of the organization. The passage reads, in part,

> The National Association of Scholars is...committed to rational discourse as the foundation of academic life in a free and democratic society... The NAS is deeply concerned about the widening currency within the academy of perspectives which reflexively denigrate the values and institutions of our society. Because such tendencies are often dogmatic in character, and indifferent to both logic and evidence, they also tend to undermine the basis for coherent scholarly dialogue. Recognizing the significance of this problem, the NAS encourages a renewed assertiveness among academics who value reason and an open intellectual life.

The statement emphasizes the same values professed by the TDC: The need for rational, open discourse to oppose the irrationality of the opposition. The statement also divides the world into two opposing factions. Like TDC, the NAS sees the opposition as compromising education standards through the use of ideology, rather than truth.

Articles in *Academic Questions* reinforce the same view. McDonald (1992, Fall) argues that, unlike the 1960s, the "PC revolution of the 1980s" has resulted in university hiring based on "political criteria" rather than by "professional standards." He contends that departments "deny promotions or tenure to faculty members whose views fail to conform to a politically correct line" (pp. 9-10). Chase (1993, Spring) laments the death of general education at hands of "too many professors [who] decided it was not elitist enough" (p. 21). Simons (1993, Spring) tells the story of "Ernest Goodman, SUNY-Oneonta professor of political science and member of the National Association of Scholars, a target of those who term the traditional liberal arts curriculum oppressive" (p. 63). And London (1993, Summer) notes that "nothing is more typical of the politically correct than this tendency to slur critics." He defends the pursuit of objectivity with the arguments, "It is not most conservatives who adopt a static conception of society but the relativists who oppose objectivity. Consider that to be objective, one must willing to subject one's opinions to the tests of evidence and logic. The road to objectivity is littered with the theories and opinion that have failed these tests. But that is the path to truth" (pp. 7-8).

In sum, both organizations argue that they are engaged in a war against a unified enemy. Both argue, that, unlike the opponent, they favor truth, morality, open debate, academic freedom, and an open society. The characterizations reveal a sense of moral and ethical indignation which reflects the sense of ideological struggle between two sides.

The World is Zero Sum

All issues are either win or lose for your side. And a win for one side comes at the expense of the other side; similarly, a loss represents a gain for the other side. Every class taught, every hiring

decision, every administrative edict represents a victory or defeat for either side. The impact magnifies the importance of every issue.

Writing in *Democratic Culture*, Wilson (1993, Fall) describes conservative attacks against Sheldon Hackney in his bid to become chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities. He writes, "Hackney also has commented that since he would be criticized no matter what he did, 'I might as well do what I think is right'" (p. 12). Wilson suggests that the opposition politicizes every event, even though Hackney is a leader, "who is determined not to manipulate the agency [NEH] to serve his ideological aims, who is not afraid of controversy, and who can deal with the inevitable attacks from conservatives" (p. 12). The enemy's attacks make is necessary to fight the battle. A "Newsclip" in the Spring, 1993 edition of *Democratic Culture* makes the same argument. "Public resentment at the rising costs of higher education has provided an effective weapon for conservatives attacking universities." The editor argues that conservatives simplify the complicated issues of college funding by scapegoating "leftist professors" (p. 9). That is, every issue is an issue in the "cold war" because conservatives make it an issue. As a result, students are victimized. June (1993, Fall) writes that the "multicultural 'canon wars' continue to relegate students to the margins of the very debates which center and evolve around them" (p. 20).

The basic accusation is that what should be normally considered appointments or decisions based on competence become targeted as venues for ideological struggle. The opposition views all elements as a battlefield, at the expense of innocent bystanders (students). Both the outcomes, and the process, creates the sense of loss. But clearly, the opposition shoulders the moral responsibility for making this happen.

Members of the NAS make the same arguments. For example, London (1992, Fall) decries an art show at Harvard Divinity School which featured art objects constructed from condoms. London states, "Once a bastion of conservation religious thought and a center for the training of establishment Protestant ministers, Harvard Divinity now rides the wave of radical chic." London introduced the

incident by placing it in the context of other trends in higher education: "segregation by race, banned in the rest of society, flourishes in the academy, meritocratic standards have retreated before quotas, or what are euphemistically called goals, and radical orthodoxy has insinuated itself into the curriculum at the expense of rational discourse." Not just an isolated incident, London declares the event to be part of a "pattern throughout higher education" where deans and presidents deny the existence of political correctness while promoting it.

Both organizations define every event they write about as an example of the opposition's sinister use of power. Every program that is cut (or added) can be evaluated on the basis of a win/loss by each side. The failure of a course to be modified, or the successful addition to the curriculum indicates an outcome that can be used to evaluate this struggle. An art exhibit of condoms cannot be judged as an example of one student's attempt at artistic expression (either as a poor or good one) but the exhibit becomes a symbol of the larger struggle. The decision to show or not to show this exhibit creates the zero sum attitude. Not showing the exhibit is a victory for the forces of traditional education and a loss for those wanting to open the debate. Showing the exhibit, which was done, creates a corresponding loss/gain in opposite directions. When all choices start to be viewed in this manner, the zero-sum attitude has developed.

Our Side is Losing

A fundamental driving force for the continuation of the conflict comes from the belief that a side is losing. The collateral tenet is that "nothing happens without a reason." So the threat is not episodic or random but there exists an organized effort to overthrow or to undermine the system the side supports. The threat exists from the other side and they are very powerful. Our side must be unified, and may have to resort to questionable tactics to restore the balance.

This notion of threat is considered in terms of the issue of fairness and the "balance" necessary to make the system work. The problem is that the system is out of balance and the other side has disrupted

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the nature of things. The other side does so using unfair tactics producing arbitrary and unfair outcomes. The result is that our side must now resort to the use of difficult tactics.

The presumption is that the side is losing and this must drive the efforts to generate even greater efforts. The key is that no objective agreed on set of conditions exist to determine what should constitute the evaluative criteria for an outcome. The result is generally a series of narratives told over and over about the injustices that exist and how they are continually perpetuated by the other side. The result is that the story becomes the justification for the belief.

An examination of the official publication of the National Association of Scholars, *Academic Questions*, provides a series of stories. James Stever (1996-1997) opens his article with stories of veterans attacked by others on campus. He then asks the question, "Are these merely random incidents or indicators a larger pattern?(p. 41). His argument is that the veteran is being slowly ousted on campus by antimilitary feelings.

Despite the superiority of their values and perspectives, both organizations describe the insurmountable forces of the opposition to suggest that they are losing the war. Furthermore, both argue that the news media and university administrators are against them, creating an even greater obstacle for them to overcome to convey the truth. In *Democratic Culture* the arguments center on the financial strength of the opponent, and also the support conservatives receive from the mass media and university administrators. Jay and Graff (1992, Fall) write in the initial edition of the newsletter, "this column will continue to document the increasingly successful attempt of conservative foundations to buy the influence on higher education that their ideas have been unable to win on their merits." In particular, the authors point to organizations such as Olin and Scafe that provide money, guest speakers, and other materials to conservative professors. They ask the rhetorical question, "How can a budget-strapped Dean in an era of recession and state funding cuts turn down such a bonanza?" (p. 5-6). The authors characterize the offers from these organizations as examples of the use of financial resources to unfairly influence the process of debate.

Not only are conservatives better funded, TDC argues, but they have the mass media and administrators on their side. Loeb (1994, Fall) writes, "PC-baiting could not have succeeded had America's national media questioned the truth of the distorted, exaggerated, and fraudulent examples that they so blithely passed on—examples repeated in article after article." In contrast, any well written leftist articles, Loeb contends, were printed only in "publications of modest circulation."

The National Association of Scholars convey the same sense of hopelessness. This attitude is reflected in the title of the NAS's journal, *Academic Questions*. The pun in the title suggests a questioning of the academy, but also the sense that the questions raised are merely academic, not really worth serious consideration. The title of the publication reflects a defeatist attitude.

Articles within the journal tend to raise questions, but few answers to the problems posed by the opposition. For example, an Editor's note to an article about liberal victims of political correctness states that "the privileged status of an extremist ideology encourages its partisans to engage in dishonest and ruthless stratagems they would not otherwise attempt" (1993, Spring, p. 59). MacDonald (1993, Summer) uses phrases such as "the disintegration of the academy and the deterioration of our intellectual life," "the eclipse of its traditional subject matter," and "vanquished all remnants of scholarship" (pp. 39-41) to describe the opposition's impending complete takeover and destruction of the academy.

The result is a call to greater effort, a warning to watch out, and plans issued for future confrontations. The problem with winning is that your struggle is not as serious or the issues as critical. A certain level of fear and paranoia are required to keep the need for vigilance and motivate the membership.

RESULTS OF A MIRROR IMAGE

While in the long run, one side may emerge victorious, the short run only produces a stalemate that builds the body count. The outcome of the academic battle is the loss of status, jobs, integrity, and morality. A mirror image is based on an ethnocentric sense of superiority that serves as a basis for the

distortion of perception. Any group that feels morally superior and threatened by a powerful evil and malignant opponent will respond savagely.

The first casualty of a mirror image is the notion of truth. Information and attitudes are interpreted in terms of advocacy rather than any examination of the merits of the position. The perceptual biases of the participants on either side distort the actions and statements. The result is a great difficulty in negotiating or understanding events as they unfold.

The second casualty is the loss of innocents or what the military would call "collateral damage." Collateral damage defines that impact on nonmilitary targets and persons standing too close to the military action. During the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, it was the peasant ground under by economic or military struggles that provided no benefit. In the academy the untenured scholar, the submitted article, the application to a program or a job all become the places where persons are damaged. Many of the persons effected are relatively unaware of the causes of the struggle only the outcome as it effects them are known. The assumption of the combatants is that the person was making an active choice.

The third tragic outcome stems from the loss of self-determinism. The big forces at work, almost a system headed by inertia contributes to a perception that drives outcomes. A person cannot undertake an action independent of these issues. Because all actions and statements become interpreted in terms of this underlying conflict. Both sides view local outcomes as solutions or resolutions to conflicts decided by the participation of forces at a higher level. Since all acts are political, the result has implications for a larger body.

Much like a Castro, a Mao, a Ho Chi Mihn, all persons must choose in the great confrontation. There are no bystanders or innocent persons. The result is that the process of labeling is constantly taking place. In the modern debate the label of "feminist," "democratic," and "multicultural," all play roles. The use of the term "politically correct" indicates an assignment of value to a position. Since the actors and actions are all zero sum, the judgment is one of loss or profit.

Consider the use of the term, "politically correct." This term is generally used to describe, in undesirable and rather sarcastic terms, the actions or statements of another person. The term became "captured" (another military term) by the political right and used to critique the left. To be politically correct was considered undesirable. The term became associated with the identification and labeling of perceived excesses on the part of administrators and others in an effort to create a level playing field. The result was the application of a label that created an emotional attachment to any action. The label of political correctness when applied to any particular action was to lower the value of the action.

Mirror images create a sense of loss for both sides. The greatest loss is that each side loses track of the other side. The distortion of perception takes the other side and creates a reflection that captures the image of what the sides wishes to see. By concentrating on that image and generating a body of rhetoric to reflect that image, the image becomes reality.

CONCLUSIONS

Both NAS and TDC recognize each other as existing and define themselves in terms of the other. Both organizations describe the forces they oppose as unreasonably attempting to limit or enforce a set of unfair rules. Strangely enough, both sides claim that only their organization can represent the interests of free speech. Both sides point to a number of attempt by others to limit the right of participation and the ability to contribute to discourse.

Each organization has constructed a system of rules, values, and actions that permits the members to construct a world in which all actions become reflected against the mirror image of an opponent. The danger of a mirror image is that the person only sees themselves and not the other person.

Many other public disagreements may reflect the idea of a mirror image. The conflict over abortion rights represents a conflict where each side has developed a sense of polarized sense of options, has believed the other is out to destroy the way of life as they know it. In the abortion debate both sides argue for the rights of the individual, both sides are willing to justify excesses and put up with allies

normally found unattractive. The killing of doctors performing abortions becomes justified because the doctors are mass murderers. The causes against death becomes the justification for the taking of a human life. The leaders regret that people feel so strongly that they become motivated to stop the killing by becoming killers themselves. The justification of death for doctors performing abortions or the bombing of clinics where to procedure is performed demonstrates example of the motivational power of a mirror image.

The ending of the Cold War for the superpowers with the disintegration of the Soviet Union left the United States foreign policy rhetorically confused. Which policy options does the United States pursue if the other side simply disappears. The new use of "uncertainty" as a fear basis is an attempt to justify the machinery for future struggles now the current one is over. Recently, a leader of the TDC, John Wilson announced that the TDC has "lost" the cultural wars, but the editor of *Academic Questions* (Pinsker, 1997) points out the struggle for his side is far from over. While he is happy at the prospect of success, he views much of the world still supporting the same views. Some images and metaphors survive, it seems, long after the struggle is over.

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Table 1

Examples of Mirror Image Rhetoric

I. Two Sides Exist

A. War Metaphors
B. We speak for truth, morality, open debate, academic freedom
C. Options are limited

Teachers around the country began to discuss the need for an organization that would counter the publicity campaign against "political correctness".

Our major lobbying effort has been directed at the increasingly coercive imposition of a conservation agenda

In *Illiberal Education*, Dinesh D'Souza wrote, "some colleges, such as Ohio State University are going beyond a single requirement: They are overhauling the entire curriculum to reflect what they call 'issues of race, ethnicity, and gender.'" Like much of D'Souza's book, this turns out to be a gross exaggeration and distortion of the facts.

The endless recycling of horrifying anecdotes has been one of the most effective devices used by conservatives to convince the public that a PC monster exists. But when its radicals who are being censored, a short article appears in the *New York Times* or the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and the issue is quickly forgotten.

Conservative critics of the academic left have tried to claim the rhetorical high road with appeals to intellectual disinterestedness, nonpartisanship, and standards, against leftists' alleged debasement of these values. But much conservative criticism in practice bears the marks of the kind of partisan smear campaign that Republicans have specialized in from Nixon's dirty little tricks to Bush's Willie Horton ploy and his cheap personal attacks on Clinton and Gore.

Although it is encouraging to find more reasonable voices in these cultural disputes, it would be unfortunate to declare the end of a crisis and return quietly to our classrooms. The culture wars have provided us with a unique opportunity to re-examine the ideals of colleges and universities, and to answer the questions of what should be taught and how we ought to teach. The misrepresentations about the changes currently going on in academia have often distracted us from addressing these issues.

For the last few years, we have joined many of our colleagues in defending the academy against charges of "political correctness." We still believe that the anti-PC assault was and is orchestrated by politically motivated operatives outside higher education who want to turn back the clock to the days of ivy-covered, white male prep schools catering to the American power

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elite. This threat seemed serious enough to us to warrant minimizing the grain of truth in the PC charges, which were always exaggeration rather than pure fabrication.

Contrary to media reports, it is the National Association of Scholars, their corporate supporters, and like-minded writers in the press who are endangering education with a campaign of harassment and misrepresentation.

For the past few years conservative academics and media pundits have been attacking the gamut of liberal and left thought in academia under rubric of "political correctness." The assault on PC has been useful in silencing discussion of racism, sexism, and anti-gay bigotry as well as a variety of alternative political issues.

The political struggle over the National Endowment for the Humanities represents one of today's most severe threats to academic freedom and intellectual debate. While the efforts to annihilate the agency, led by former NEH chair Lynne Cheney, will probably not succeed, there is tremendous danger of a chilling effect on controversial grants in the future.

II. The World is Zero Sum

A. A loss for our side is again for the opposition
B. Every class, hiring decision, or administrative edict is a loss or gain.

The lawsuit filed against MIT by professor of literature Cynthia Griffin Wolff provides an instructive example of the way the non-familiar stories of decline and terrorism in the university are manufactured and circulated. Wolff charges MIT with acquiescing in a "persistent and continuing pattern of professional, political, and sexual harassment." Her suffering began, she claims in the legal complaint, with her conscientious opposition to the tenuring of two female collegues and culminated in a "campaign of verbal abuse and isolation." In the document submitted to Massachusetts Superior Court, Wolff contends that she was denied an opportunity to teach in MIT's Women's Studies Program in retaliation for her role in tenure decisions and was vilified by colleagues because "the content of her scholarship did not comport with their stated ideological and political orientation.

The attacks on "political correctness" have commonly asserted that McCarthyism in America has moved to the left, and now appears only in intolerant campaigns to suppress the free speech of conservative and liberal dissenters.

Tales of political correctness have been inflated like Macy's parade balloons, causing a smokescreen of the true crisis in higher education: The underfunding of universities designed to deprive many students of access to a college education

The campaign of misinformation and ideological attacks against Sheldon Hackney has failed to derail his nomination as chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Hackney was never the real target of these attacks. He was a moderate caught in the middle of the crossfire in the war against political correctness.

From the groves of academia to the pages of Newsweek, the multicultural "canon wars" continue to relegate students to the margins of the very debates which center and evolve around them.

TDC wants to counter the conservatives one-sided accounts by beginning a national project to monitor violations of academic freedom and intolerance on college campuses. If you have information about tenure denials, censorship, intolerance, or similar events on campus...please let TDC know.

III. Our Side is Losing

A. System is out of balance because of opposition
B. Other side uses unfair tactics, so we have to as well

we organized a protest against the packing of the NEH advisory council with outspoken opponents of new directions in the humanities.

There are signs that the ideological smear campaign against new academic movements that has had its way in the public media for so long may at last be getting exposed for what it is.

In future issues of *Democratic Culture*, this column will continue to document the increasingly successful attempt of conservative foundations to buy the influence on higher education that their ideas have been unable to win on their merits.

After years of unabashed bashing by the conservatives, the academic left is learning to bash back, to make their own criticisms of higher education and to analyze their reception in the public culture.

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